



Shine
LITERACY

**2020
ANNUAL REPORT**



CHAIRPERSON REPORT KEHILOE NTSEKHE



Shine Literacy was not spared from a year that compelled us all to reflect, stretch, innovate, and embrace change with grace and heaps of courage. Given the events of the past year and ongoing challenges facing education, I feel it necessary to express my appreciation and gratitude to the people who make Shine Literacy a vital part of the nationwide marathon to improve literacy in South Africa.

Much gratitude to the Shine Literacy team for their hard work, perseverance and resilience. Despite personal losses and heartache for some in the team, their commitment and dedication inspired fresh ideas and efforts to continue reaching children marooned at home by the pandemic. Some of the pleasing highlights of the past year include the successful delivery of resource packs to children; Shine Literacy's provision of valuable assistance to principals and teachers in schools; and more recently, the launch of the data free mobile site '**Story Time with Shine Literacy**'.

Immense gratitude to Maurita for her steady and reflective leadership, and for her continuing willingness to collaborate and share her energy and wisdom with the community at large.

I am forever grateful to the Board for their guidance and support over the years and especially for their leadership since the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020. That Shine Literacy continues to deliver on its mandate and be a sustainable entity in this tough economic climate is due in part to the Board's sage wisdom and advice.

Deep appreciation to our funders, crowd funding partners and loyal supporters. Your commitment to gift our most vulnerable children a brighter future through education, is highly valued.

A huge thank you to all our volunteers who are the heroes of the Shine Literacy story. Thank you for your trust and patience as we navigate this unusual time. I am positive that our treasured and precious relationship will continue to be as impactful as ever whilst embracing the need for safety and more considered ways of engagement.

I am extremely proud to be part of this amazing organisation.

Kehiloe Ntsekhe
Chairperson



DIRECTOR'S REPORT MAURITA WEISSENBERG

2020 was a year of loss. Our flagship programme was on pause, we didn't renew our Head Office lease, we no longer had 1500 volunteers working in our programmes each week, and then our team suffered personally, losing parents, family, and friends.

Yet the year taught us so much, and if I had to say what has been our saving grace, it would be the investments we have made over the years. Not just our financial reserves, but also the many years of embedding Nancy Kline's Thinking Environment into our ethos, and the time spent creating databases and project systems, all which have made working remotely effortless.

2020 has been the year of true collaboration and teamwork. The sense of Team spirit, which helped create the space to share ideas and resources across non-profits, government organisations and civil society, is unprecedented.

Shine's two programmes, born out of Covid-19, address systemic issues that I believe are at the heart of our national reading crisis. I believe that the work we are doing right now is imperative to achieving our overall vision of a nation of readers.

Thank you to our volunteers who have continued to support us and have donated towards our @home-resource packs, ensuring that children have their own books at home. Thank you to our funders who stood by us and supported our new programmes. I especially want to thank the Shine Team and Board of Trustees who have shown enormous resilience and strength through these challenging times.

Maurita Weissenberg

Founder & Executive Director Shine Literacy





SHINE LITERACY PROGRAMMES 2020

While the circumstances were not ideal, the Covid-19 pandemic provided a unique opportunity for Shine Literacy to support learners and teachers in times of immense stress and uncertainty. The Creating a Culture of Reading at Home packs distributed to 46 schools in the Eastern Cape, Western Cape, KwaZulu-Natal and Gauteng provinces, impacted not only Grade One, Two and Three learners who received them, but their nuclear and extended families as well. From the beginning of the government mandated national lockdown, we at Shine worked hard to ensure that our partner schools were equipped and supported with resources that would help at-home learning. Supporting learning and creating a culture of reading at home, has long formed part of the ethos and the core of our mission at Shine. Therefore, the distribution of learner resources in schools was a natural and necessary progression for Shine Literacy.

Comprehensive learner packs were distributed to all children in Grades One, Two and Three in Shine Literacy's Schools. The packs were carefully curated by Shine Literacy staff who have extensive experience in Foundation Phase education, in consultation with teachers and some parents. The packs were compiled in three languages, English, IsiXhosa and Afrikaans. The packs were distributed in June, September and November. This has now created a new programme called Creating a Culture of Reading at Home with the intention of supporting parents with their children's literacy learning in the home. Feedback from parents and caregivers told us that they were especially grateful for the assistance and support they received

VUYELWA MBALEKWA



from Shine during 2020. All parents and caregivers surveyed found the packs helpful. In fact, the overwhelming feedback indicated that more initiatives such as these would be appreciated. Parents found the packs to be incredibly effective in supporting both themselves and their children. They urge Shine Literacy for more such resources, especially as it is not known when the Covid-19 pandemic will end. One parent noted "Our children are working hard and want to make us proud, we also want to help them", while another said, "I'm confident my child can go to the next Grade after having resources like the Shine Pack"

Online platforms provided an important beacon of support for parents and caregivers at home with their children. Many schools created parent-teacher chat groups on social media platforms such as WhatsApp in an effort to create an open means of communication and support for parents and caregivers. In our end of year research, 86.3% of respondents reported having such groups and chats available to them during the Covid-19 lockdown period, with one parent going as far as to say "I don't know what I would have done without that group chat with my child's teacher". In most cases where parents did not have access to such chats, it was mainly due to not having a cell phone. However, the majority enjoyed the benefits of these chats.

To this end, Shine Literacy now has a zero-rated website and has recently launched a mobi-site which is also data-free to further embed the technological support.

In 2020, Year Beyond managed to hold training for 350 young people across the Western Cape. They were to be reading assistants in Grades Three and Four in 60 schools. These young people were trained on paired reading methodology by Shine Literacy, but were unable to begin the programme due to Covid-10 lockdown. Instead, they were used to support schools with their feeding programmes, and with the distribution of materials at schools. They also continued with their remote personal development modules, as per government regulations.

Our programmes team took the time to do a deep dive into looking at the sustainability of the organisational programmes in light of the challenges presented. We are pleased to be launching revised and new programmes in the coming year. We will take cognizance of the challenges that 2020 presented, and will make our organisation relevant for the future needs of the education landscape. A strong emphasis will be placed on home support and the forging of strong home-school links using technology as a vehicle to create easier access to our beneficiaries.

Vuyelwa Mbalekwa
Programme Manager



TREASURER'S REPORT GRAEME AURET

Looking back at 2020, we find many similarities in the current environment in the challenges and effects of the Covid-19 pandemic, on the general economy and hence on most businesses and similar on NPO's. The uncertainty of the ongoing effects of illness and vaccine rollout on all facets of life and the economy, have resulted in so many aspects of life becoming more dynamic and fluid in activities and delivery models. The contraction in the economy is evident across all sectors.

In reviewing the 2020 financial results of Shine Literacy, we see a satisfactory set of results delivering a valuable surplus, albeit as last year, largely from our investment income. Our focus over the last few years has been to ensure a sustainable and robust balance sheet. This has paid dividends in that we have indeed achieved a surplus of R472 058 for the year and good cash generation.

Shine Literacy's management has continued focussing on its right-sized team and infrastructure which has been a key to ensuring that costs have been contained. This is against a reduced donor funding base, which as expected, was lower due to donors adopting conservative approaches to spending, even to such good causes as Shine Literacy. Well done to the Shine Literacy Team on this delivery under tight financial conditions.

Our donor funding reduced from R7.8 million in 2019 to R6.3 million in 2020, a 19% reduction. On the cost front, a 20% reduction was achieved, not only in overheads, but by clearly and purposefully matching donor funds, as well as by adapting delivery and support to the children via parents and teachers during lockdowns and school closures.

The balance sheet continues to be robust with strong reserves of R12.5 million in investments. These investments allow us to believe we can deliver on our promise to our learners and that we are committed to their reading and education.

Looking forward, we must plan for the time when the strictures brought about by the Covid-19 pandemic are lifted. There will be ongoing tough economic times in South Africa as well as uncertainty, requiring us to have the flexibility to scale and de-scale as circumstances change. As in 2020, there undoubtedly will be pressure on donors to reduce Corporate Social Investment (CSI)-type donations/funding as donors themselves find it hard going.

Nonetheless, I congratulate the Shine team on their efforts and ability to work together and to achieve what they have done in the past year, and I look forward to their positive achievements in the year ahead.

Thank you.

Graeme Auret
Treasurer





INDIVIDUAL DONOR CAMPAIGN PUMZA MARUBELELA



As a response to Covid-19 we had two concerns that we wanted to address immediately:

1. Ensure that our partner schools are well equipped and supported with resources that help with learning at home.
2. Ensure that we successfully deliver our Creating a Culture @home packs to 46 schools in communities throughout Cape Town, KwaZulu-Natal, Eastern Cape and Gauteng. Our goal is to supply the packs to 10 000 children in Grades One, Two and Three.

This was especially important as we were forced to pause our Shine Literacy Hour Programmes in schools. This also meant that we had to inform all our major and individual donors about these changes to our programmes while we repurposed funding into this emergency response. We are fortunate to have funders who trusted our strategy and supported us by continuing to fund us, while some even offered emergency Covid-19 funding.

The Covid-19 pandemic has provided a unique opportunity for Shine Literacy volunteers and our other supporters to still be very involved in their beloved Shine Literacy Centres by responding positively to our individual donor campaign. In June 2020, we launched our individual donor campaign called **Words Can Change Worlds**. This campaign was created as a direct response to challenges with online learning in South Africa as schools closed during the government mandated national lockdown. In South Africa a large portion of school children cannot just move to online learning, and a majority still have minimal literacy resources at home. More than ever, children need to have their own home library of books, magazines and writing resources. With this in mind, we prepared Shine Literacy packs for every child in Grades One, Two and Three in our Shine Literacy Hour schools.

This campaign is dedicated to increasing children's access to quality literacy resources and learning opportunities, and seeks to inspire parents, caregivers and communities to play an active role in promoting early literacy. We called on, and encouraged our loyal supporters to join the campaign by donating R140 once off or monthly, to ensure that children have access to early literacy and language resources even during school closures.

In our first month of launching the campaign we were able to raise just over R70 000. Thanks to all our volunteers and loyal supporters, the campaign grew from strength to strength. To date we have raised close to R400 000 and counting. We are raising the stakes in 2021 and are hoping to increase our monthly and once off donations as the need is still great. As we pick up the pieces and try to navigate 2021, our goal is to ensure that every child in Grades One, Two and Three has access to their own learning and reading resources in the home through the **Words Can Change Worlds** campaign.

Pumza Marubelela

Communications & Stakeholder Manager



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